

Late

# HAWAII YOUTH SERVICES NETWORK

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- Daryl Selman, President
- Judith F. Clark, Executive Director
- Aloha House
- American Civil Liberties Union of Hawaii
- Bay Clinic, Inc.
- Big Brothers Big Sisters of Honolulu
- Big Island Substance Abuse Council
- Blueprint for Change
- Bobby Benson Center
- Catholic Charities Hawaii
- Child and Family Service
- Coalition for a Drug Free Hawaii
- Domestic Violence Action Center
- EPIC, Inc.
- Family Support Hawaii
- Hale Kipa, Inc.
- Hale 'Opio Kauai, Inc.
- Hawaii Behavioral Health
- Hawaii Student Television
- Healthy Mothers Healthy Babies Coalition
- Hina Mauka Teen Care
- Hui Malama Learning Center
- Kahi Mohala Behavioral Health
- KEY (Kualoa-Heeia Ecumenical Youth) Project
- Kids Hurt Too
- Kokua Kalihi Valley
- Life Foundation
- Marimed Foundation
- Maui Youth and Family Services
- Palama Settlement
- P.A.R.E.N.T.S., Inc.
- Parents and Children Together (PACT)
- Planned Parenthood of Hawaii
- REAL
- Salvation Army Family Intervention Svcs.
- Salvation Army Family Treatment Svcs.
- Sex Abuse Treatment Center
- Susannah Wesley Community Center
- The Catalyst Group
- The Children's Alliance of Hawaii
- Waikiki Health Center
- Women Helping Women
- YWCA of Kauai

**LATE**

January 30, 2013

To: Representative Mele Carroll, Chair,  
And members of the Committee on Human Services

## Testimony in Support of HB 873 Relating to the Young Adult Voluntary Foster Care Act

Hawaii Youth Services Network (HYSN), a statewide coalition of youth-serving organizations, supports HB 873 Relating to the Young Adult Voluntary Foster Care Act.

Young people who age out of foster care at age 18 face significant challenges. The Midwest Evaluation of Adult Functioning of Former Foster Youth showed that by age 24:

- 40% of young people had been homeless since leaving foster care;
- ¼ did not have a high school diploma (compared to 7.35 of peers who did not experience foster care);
- Half were unemployed (twice as high as the general young adult population);
- 81% of males had been arrested (compared to 17% of all young adults);

Outcomes are much better for young people who stay in care to age 21 (from Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative Issue Brief - :

- Those required to leave care at age 18 were 2.7 times more likely to have been homeless;
- Remaining in care more than doubled the odds that young people would be working or in school at age 19;
- Those remaining in care were twice as likely to have completed at least one year of college by age 21;

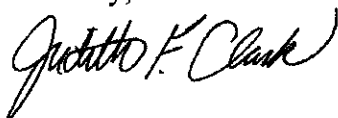
- Young women remaining in care experienced a 38% reduction in the incidence of pregnancy before age 20;
- Those remaining in care were more likely to access independent living services.

Extending foster care to age 21 has financial benefits for both the young adult and society. Increasing opportunities to complete college and vocational programs results in higher earning potential over a lifetime. Extended foster care decreases costs to society from early child bearing as teen mothers are 2.2 times more likely to have a child placed in foster care than those who delay child bearing until age 20 or 21.

Most young people are not prepared to take on all of the responsibilities of adult living at age 18. Our youth in foster care deserve this support in making successful transitions to adulthood.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Judith F. Clark". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial "J".

Judith F. Clark, MPH  
Executive Director